



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION GIVES 1948 ACHIEVEMENT AWARD TO F.W.S. BIOLOGIST

Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Thomas Z. Atkeson has been given the Blinded Veterans Association Achievement Award for 1948, the Service reported today.

Mr. Atkeson, a former Army cavalry captain, lost both his arms below the elbow and was blinded in a land-mine explosion at Camp Hood, Texas, in October 1943. A biologist at the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, Decatur, Ala., from 1939 until his entry into the Army in 1942, Mr. Atkeson returned to his civilian post in May 1946.

The B.V.A. award is given annually to "the blinded veteran who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in his chosen field of endeavor." Mr. Atkeson's award, a gold repeater clock, was presented recently at a banquet by Julius Klein, national commander of the Jewish War Veterans.

Assisted by a Veterans Administration-employed reader-helper (also a disabled veteran), Mr. Atkeson negotiates contracts and collects rent from tenant farmers who cultivate land on the Wheeler Refuge, performs public relations work for the Refuge, bands migratory waterfowl, and collects biological data on southeastern wildlife refuges for technical reports.

Mr. Atkeson is 36-years old and was born in Columbia, Ala. He has a B.S. degree in forestry from the University of Georgia and has done graduate work in wildlife management at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute. He is married and has two children.

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